

Arizona Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Luncheon

Remarks by Governor Jan Brewer
Scottsdale Plaza Resort
Wednesday, June 24, 2009

It is a pleasure to be here as a part of the Chamber's Annual Awards Luncheon. Of course, this is not the first time that you've invited me.

But, for some reason, this time, you gave me a seat RIGHT IN FRONT. I'm grateful for that.

I am also grateful for the Chamber's thoughtful assessment of my 5-point plan to return the state to fiscal stability – and sanity.

You believe the budget process should focus on long-term needs and resources – so do I.

You believe in prudent reforms to Proposition 105 – so do I.

You believe in spending cuts – and so do I.

REASONABLE spending cuts, that is.

You believe in tax reform, and so do I.

You believe if a tax increase is to be a part of the budget solution, it must be short-term and part of a tax reform package that would aid in job retention and job creation.

And so do I.

Let me give you an example of what my Arizona Department of Commerce is doing to address these very issues of job creation and job retention.

Three weeks ago I appointed Donald E. Cardon as Director of Commerce.

Today, I am proud to tell you Commerce has been reorganized.

It has reorganized not simply as a result of budget implications, but, instead, in response to what this agency must be for Arizona.

It must be more credible with the business community, our local governments and the Legislature.

It must be focused.

Gone is the day of Commerce's ambiguous mission and limited results.

It must be efficient. Duplications have been eliminated.

It must be aggressive.

It is encouraging Arizona's economic development groups to work together. It is encouraging our top CEOs to be engaged.

We are competing for the good of the state. Arizona must be positioned to compete with other states, with other countries.

And, we must win more. We must win more investments such as Intel's \$3 billion decision to expand its Chandler operations.

We must win more Solar projects like Albiasa (All-bee-ah-sah) Solar in Kingman and Lockheed Martin's Starwood in the far West Valley.

We must win more projects such as Shutterfly – which wants to grow its engineering talent at its new Phoenix facility.

A necessary part of Arizona's move toward a high-tech economy is our sustaining and further developing high-skilled, high paying jobs -- created in the aerospace and defense industries.

The aerospace and defense industries account for 57,000 jobs in Arizona with a total industry payroll of \$3.4 billion.

Arizonans should take great pride in the important programs that reside in our state such as the Apache helicopter, which day in and day out keeps our troops safe in Iraq and Afghanistan, and our missile defense programs, which protect our homeland from unstable regimes abroad.

We must work together to ensure these programs remain healthy, and ensure our state is positioned to attract new programs in the future.

With the recent creation of the Arizona Aerospace Institute we are on the right path to expanding this critical component of Arizona's economy.

So, let there be no doubt. I believe the aerospace and defense industries must be a driving force for our state's prosperity.

And – too often overlooked – we need to continue to take care of Arizona companies already here so that they stay and keep jobs in our state.

More than 90 percent of Arizona's businesses are classified as small – these are a critical economic engine for Arizona.

The focus I have both as Governor and as an Arizonan is where our state will be in the coming decade with regard to economic opportunities for our children and families – this is very real to me.

I have directed Don Cardon to lead - and lead strongly.

And, he is doing just that.

As you know, I am a strong advocate for regulatory reform, and once again you and I are in agreement.

We agree that this is hardly the time for new and burdensome regulations that only serve to strangle businesses and add needless costs and frustrations to people who are simply trying to make an honest living.

Now, I probably don't have to remind you that on my second day in office, I issued a directive freezing all new agency regulations and rulemaking.

One way to stimulate the Arizona economy, is for government to get out of the way, and let you, the creators of jobs and wealth, work your magic in the market place.

Also, I intend to make the Rainy Day Fund something more than a shoe box stuffed with spare cash.

I intend to make it a real Rainy Day Fund restoring to it 15 percent of general revenue funds.

Finally, I want to applaud the Chamber's efforts in its opposition to that monstrosity of proposed federal legislation called the Employee Free Choice Act.

Its true title should be THE END OF THE SECRET BALLOT.

Arizona has always prided itself as a champion of the rights of all workers, you are on the side of right in fighting this so-called Card Check plan.

Thank you for doing it.

Thank you for your work on behalf of the citizens -- and companies -- of Arizona.

And, finally, thank you for your efforts to secure an honest budget, and for your fight to ensure the blessings of our economic freedoms.